

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of processing a print job of a customer before submitting the print job to at least one of a plurality of print providers, the method comprising
5 the steps of:
- providing a print processing system controller having a printing capability of the print providers registered therewith;
 - defining a network communication link between the customer and the print processing system controller;
 - 10 receiving a data file for the print job at the print processing system controller via the network communication link; and
 - determining at least one document type for the print job via the print processing system controller, including processing the data file for the print job to determine the at least one document type for the print job.
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2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of defining the network communication link includes defining an Internet communication link between the customer and the print processing system controller.
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3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining the at least one document type for the print job includes processing the data file for the print job and determining from the data file at least one of a file format, a number of pages, a print medium, a printing layout, a color content, and an image presence of the print job.
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4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining the at least one document type includes determining a set of document types for the print job, and further comprising the steps of:
- presenting the set of document types to the customer via the network
 - 30 communication link; and

receiving a print request for the print job at the print processing system controller via the network communication link, including specifying a document type for the print job from the set of document types for the print job.

5 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving the print request further includes specifying at least one of a number of copies, a cost characteristic, a quality characteristic, and a due date characteristic for the print job.

10 6. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of receiving the print request further includes specifying at least one of a print medium, a printing layout, a color printing option, a finishing option, a delivery option, and a due date for the print job.

15 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of receiving the print request further includes specifying a plurality of selections for the at least one of the print medium, the printing layout, the color printing option, the finishing option, the delivery option, and the due date for the print job.

20 8. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:
 determining with the print processing system controller which of the print providers have the printing capability to fulfill the print job, including comparing the print request and the data file for the print job with the printing capability of the print providers;

25 compiling with the print processing system controller a list of at least one quote of at least one of the print providers which has the printing capability to fulfill the print job; and

 presenting the list of the at least one quote to the customer via the network communication link.

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9. The method of claim 8, wherein the list of the at least one quote includes at least two quotes of the at least one of the print providers.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of defining the network
5 communication link includes defining the network communication link between the customer, the print providers, and the print processing system controller, and further comprising the steps of:

selecting a quote from the list of the at least one quote and at least one
print provider of the at least one of the print providers to fulfill the print job; and
10 submitting the print job to the at least one print provider via the network communication link.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the print processing system controller
has a plurality of document models included therein, and further comprising the
15 step of:

creating the print job from a document model of the plurality of
document models.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of creating the print job
20 includes:

receiving a print job type at the print processing system controller,
compiling with the print processing system controller a set of document
models from the plurality of document models based on the print job type, the
set of document models including the document model of the plurality of
25 document models, and

presenting the set of document models to the customer via the network
communication link.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of creating the print job further
30 includes selecting the document model from the set of document models.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of creating the print job includes selecting at least one of a print medium, a printing layout, a color printing option, and a finishing option for the print job from the document model.

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15. The method of claim 14, wherein the step of creating the print job further includes presenting a cost for each of the at least one of the print medium, the printing layout, the color printing option, and the finishing option for the print job to the customer via the network communication link.

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16. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of creating the print job includes selecting a document template for the print job from the document model.

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17. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of defining the network communication link includes defining the network communication link between the customer, the print providers, and the print processing system controller, and further comprising the step of:

20 registering the print capability of each of the print providers with the print processing system controller via the network communication link.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the step of registering the printing capability includes registering at least one of a file format compatibility, a print medium capability, a printing layout capability, a color printing capability, a finishing capability, and a delivery capability of each of the print providers.

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19. A system for processing a print job of a customer before submitting the print job to at least one of a plurality of print providers, the system comprising:

30 a print processing system controller configured to have a printing capability of the print providers registered therewith,

wherein the print processing system controller is adapted to receive a data file for the print job from the customer, and wherein the print processing system controller is adapted to process the data file for the print job and determine at least one document type for the print job.

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20. The system of claim 19, wherein the at least one document type for the print job is based on at least one of a file format, a number of pages, a print medium, a printing layout, a color content, and an image presence of the print job.

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21. The system of claim 19, wherein the print processing system controller is configured to communicate with the customer via a network communication link, and wherein the print processing system controller is adapted to receive the data file for the print job from the customer via the network communication link.

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22. The system of claim 21, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.

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23. The system of claim 21, wherein the print processing system controller is adapted to determine a set of document types for the print job, present the set of document types to the customer via the network communication link, and receive a print request for the print job from the customer via the network communication link, wherein the print request specifies a document type for the print job from the set of document types for the print job.

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24. The system of claim 23, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.

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25. The system of claim 23, wherein the print request further specifies at least one of a number of copies, a cost characteristic, a quality characteristic, and a due date characteristic for the print job.

26. The system of claim 23, wherein the print request further specifies at least one of a print medium, a printing layout, a color printing option, a finishing option, a delivery option, and a due date for the print job.

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27. The system of claim 26, wherein the print request further specifies a plurality of selections for the at least one of the print medium, the printing layout, the color printing option, the finishing option, the delivery option, and the due date for the print job.

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28. The system of claim 23, wherein the print processing system controller is adapted to compare the print request and the data file for the print job with the printing capability of the print providers and determine which of the print providers have the printing capability to fulfill the print job, compile a list of at least one quote of at least one of the print providers which has the printing capability to fulfill the print job, and present the list of the at least one quote to the customer via the network communication link.

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29. The system of claim 28, wherein the list of the at least one quote includes at least two quotes of the at least one of the print providers.

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30. The system of claim 28, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.

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31. The system of claim 19, wherein the print processing system controller has a plurality of document models included therein, and wherein the print job is created from a document model of the plurality of document models.

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32. The system of claim 31, wherein the print processing system controller is adapted to receive a print job type, compile a set of document models from the plurality of document models based on the print job type, and present the set of

document models to the customer via a network communication link, the set of document models including the document model of the plurality of document models.

5 33. The system of claim 31, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.

34. The system of claim 31, wherein each of the document models include at least one of a print medium option, a printing layout option, a color printing
10 option, and a finishing option for the print job.

35. The system of claim 34, wherein each of the document models include a cost for each of the at least one of the print medium option, the printing layout option, the color printing option, and the finishing option for the print job.
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36. The system of claim 31, wherein each of the document models include at least one document template for the print job.

37. The system of claim 19, wherein the printing capability of each of the
20 print providers is registered with the print processing system controller via a network communication link.

38. The system of claim 37, wherein the network communication link is an Internet communication link.
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39. The system of claim 37, wherein the printing capability of each of the print providers includes at least one of a file format compatibility, a print medium capability, a printing layout capability, a color printing capability, a finishing capability, and a delivery capability.
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40. A method of processing a print job of a customer before submitting the print job to at least one of a plurality of print providers, the method comprising the steps of:

- 5 providing a print processing system controller having a plurality of document models included therein;
- defining a network communication link between the customer and the print processing system controller;
- receiving a print job type for the print job at the print processing system controller via the network communication link;
- 10 compiling with the print processing system controller at least one document model from the plurality of document models based on the print job type; and
- presenting the at least one document model to the customer via the network communication link.

15 41. The method of claim 40, wherein the step of defining the network communication link includes defining an Internet communication link between the customer and the print processing system controller.

20 42. The method of claim 40, further comprising the steps of:

selecting a document model from the at least one document model; and

creating the print job from the document model.

25 43. The method of claim 42, wherein the step of creating the print job includes selecting at least one of a print medium, a printing layout, a color printing option, and a finishing option for the print job from the document model.

30 44. The method of claim 43, wherein the step of presenting the at least one document model further includes presenting a cost for each of the at least one of

the print medium, the printing layout, the color printing option, and the finishing option for the print job to the customer via the network communication link.

45. The method of claim 42, wherein the step of creating the print job
5 includes selecting a document template for the print job from the document model.

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